

Lamoine Comprehensive Plan Committee

Meeting with the Budget Committee

Name of Group: Town Budget Committee
Date of Meeting: 11/30/2015
Chair or contact person: Robin Veysey, Chair (or contact Stu)

Number of people attending:

LCPC: Fred, Bob, Kathie, Bonnie (Mike was there but had to leave before meeting on a fire call, as did Stu)

Budget Committee: Robin Veysey, Merle Bragdon, Marian McDevitt.

Others: Gary McFarland, Jo Cooper

Focus or primary responsibility of group: Setting the annual budget for the Town.

Work of this group in actively planning for the future: None, really, as the chore is a recurring annual chore. There is a capital expenses list that details which major improvements will be needed in each of the years in the near future, but this is developed primarily by the Select Board.

Currently there is no bonded debt. Merle noted that a primarily residential town such as Lamoine has a very stable tax base, It is not subject to the large swings in a year due to a large mill closing, for instance. Change in the tax base is generally slow and incremental, and so are changes in the cost of services provided. The Budget Committee noted that the withdrawal from the RSU had no net effect on the Lamoine budget. Merle noted that the effect on the town of the winding down of the gravel industry is unknown and to his knowledge has not be studied.

Expressed concerns of group relating to focus or primary responsibility:

Revenue Concerns: Stu, before he left, noted that he was making only cautious assumptions about State revenue sharing with Towns, because so many items under this administration became "political footballs" and the normal flow of finances has been disrupted. Jo Cooper noted that she is on the Hancock County Budget Committee and that the State is currently taking the position that counties must pay all of the jail costs. Jail costs are a major expense and if there are passed on to the County, the towns will have to come up with the money.

Town Needs: In response to question about the feasibility of bike or pedestrian lanes along Lamoine roads, Marian noted that the rights of way are quite wide. Merle thought the rights of way probably would provide ample room for bike lanes, but that widening the paved portion of roads and creating new

shoulders would be "big ticket item." He thought this should be a consideration if the Town should establish a new road somewhere in town.

The Town office is adequate for now, and there is a plan to put a new foundation under it. Merle thinks that there is a major need in town for high speed internet throughout the town and the town may need to figure out how to get involved to make it happen.

Interesting fact to come out of the meeting: Town roads are considered by accountants to be an asset of the town worth a great deal of money. Of course, we can't sell them to raise cash, so they are a very limited kind of an asset.

Follow up: None